

So I think it is correct, and I hope most of us agree, that we save Social Security and Medicare, but we also work at paying down the debt and we let the American people keep a few more dollars of what they have earned. They already work 4 months and 11 days during the year for taxes. That is enough.

OPPOSITION TO H.R. 2398

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to voice my strong opposition to H.R. 2398, a bill that would have disastrous consequences for the economy of my district, Las Vegas, Nevada.

H.R. 2398, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, is an example of the worst type of Federal Government meddling in local matters and senseless overregulation. I believe this is an issue of importance to Members of Congress and local governments across the country.

Here is the situation in a nutshell: the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors' Authority needs to expand its convention center to accommodate the growing needs of major trade shows and conventions. This type of business is the lifeblood of the economy of my district, and hundreds of thousands of jobs depend on it. I know, because I worked in the tourism business for many, many years before coming here, and I served as a business consultant trying to meet the needs of the convention industry in my hometown. I know firsthand how critically important it is for Las Vegas to expand its convention center, and I know how important these facilities are to dozens of other communities around the Nation.

Just 3 weeks ago, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors' Authority was ready to issue revenue bonds exempt from Federal taxes. As my colleagues know, local government entities routinely issue tax exempt bonds to meet their building needs. The bond measure would allow my hometown convention center to add enough floor space to meet the needs of the convention business and maintain our reputation as one of the finest convention venues in the world into the 21st century.

The bond measure was the result of responsible local government planning for the future, to maintain a strong economy for the benefit of the 1.3 million residents of southern Nevada.

Then something shocking and outrageous happened, and it happened right here in this House. From 2,500 miles away, one of my district's most important economic development projects was torpedoed, but only temporarily, I hope. At the last minute the convention authority was forced to postpone its sale of bonds after H.R. 2398 was introduced by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) on June 30.

The remarks of the gentleman from Texas in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

indicate Houston, his hometown, cannot compete with Las Vegas as a convention destination. He targeted Las Vegas with legislation designed to stop the expansion of the new convention center.

H.R. 2398 bears the obscure and seemingly harmless title of The Private Activity Bond Clarification Act of 1999. In reality, this measure would drop a bomb on the proposed Las Vegas convention center expansion and on every other public building project in the United States that uses similar tax exempt financing.

The Las Vegas convention center expansion project is a model of prudent use of public monies and sound planning. The bonds were to be repaid through hotel room tax revenues, exactly the revenues that would grow because there would be more convention space, attracting more visitors to southern Nevada.

With a Federal tax exemption, the cost of the convention center bonds would be low and the convention center will be able to accommodate conventions that otherwise would be turned away. The financing through tax exempt bonds meets every State and Federal rule and regulation.

But now, out of the blue, comes H.R. 2398. This bill seeks to kill the Federal tax exemption by changing the IRS codes, even though the current IRS codes set clear qualifications for projects in order to be tax exempt. And I might add that this project in Las Vegas meets all of these current qualifications.

H.R. 2398 is simply a solution in search of a problem. It sets out to fix something that ain't broke, and in the process H.R. 2398 could do a whole lot of damage throughout the United States. H.R. 2398 could drive up the costs of convention centers and arenas around the country by banning tax exempt bonds for those projects. It promotes the absurd concept that the Federal Government should tax local governments.

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For no good reason, H.R. 2398 gobbles up local dollars by forcing local entities such as the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority to borrow money at higher interest rates because they would no longer qualify for Federal tax-exempt status. This amounts to an unfunded mandate and an onerous burden on our cities and our towns. I say we should be encouraging the economic boost that convention centers bring to a community, not discouraging them.

H.R. 2398 is totally out of step with the times. I know the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) must be aware that we are in an era of streamlining the IRS, not expanding it. We are in an era of reducing government intrusion on State and local matters, not meddling in them. We are in an era that recognizes the value of public-private partnerships to stimulate economic

growth. And we are certainly in an era when we are all trying to lower the tax burdens, not raise them. H.R. 2398 is on the wrong side of all of these issues and we must reject it for the economic health of our local communities. The defeat of H.R. 2398 will also defeat Federal Government meddling in local affairs and defeat overregulation and it will be a victory for common sense.

WHITHER THE SURPLUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHERWOOD). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, we have a surplus now. It is the first time since 1969 that we have had a surplus. We have this for two reasons: Number one, Congress has finally slowed down the rate of growth in government. Very important concept. We are questioning bureaucrats on how they spend our money. But, number two, and most importantly, we have a surplus because the American people have worked their tails off in the last several years and they have put in 50 and 60 hours a week and the revenues to our coffers have increased tremendously.

So now we have a big debate, a good debate going on, what to do with this surplus. I believe that there are three essential things that we should do, and that was what the debate last week was, on tax reduction.

Number one, what we should do with this surplus is pay our Social Security debts. Protect and preserve Social Security and Medicare. The President of the United States in January stood right where you are, Mr. Speaker, and said, "Let's protect 62 percent of the Social Security surplus." But the Republican Party said, "No, Mr. President, we want to protect 100 percent of the Social Security surplus and not just protect it on paper but put it in a lockbox so that it cannot be used for roads and bridges and pay raises and new entitlement programs but that money will be there for your mom and your dad's retirement."

And so, Mr. Speaker, this bill puts aside 100 percent of the Social Security surplus to the tune of \$1.9 trillion, protecting and preserving Social Security and Medicare.

Number two, this bill pays down the debt. For 40 years, because of irresponsible congressional spending, we have accumulated a \$5.4 trillion debt. This bill takes the first serious step of paying down approximately \$2 trillion of that debt by having a trigger device. The trigger device says that if you want to get a tax reduction, you have to pay down the debt. And unless the debt is paid down, then the tax reduction portion is not triggered. It is the first time that has ever been done by the House.

The third thing, of course, that the bill does is it provides the American people with \$792 billion of their money

back for their overpayment in government. I am so sick and tired of people in Washington talking about how much the tax reduction is going to cost us. Guess what? It does not cost us anything because it is not our money, Mr. Speaker. It belongs to the American people.

If you go in Wal-Mart and you buy a pair of flip-flops for \$2.50 and you give the cashier \$5, they do not keep your money. It is your money. But if you have a Washington bureaucrat cashier, you will never see your change. They will give you more shoes, more flip-flops, they will even charge you. Before you know it the \$2.50 purchase becomes a \$6 and \$7 purchase. That is how ridiculous things are in this town, Mr. Speaker. It is the American people's money and we need to give it back to them.

This comes in the form of a 10 percent tax reduction across the board, capital gains tax reduction, estate tax relief, relief for small businesses and farmers. The President of the United States, stickler for truth as he always has been, will come in and say, "Oh, you're taking money away from seniors, from children, from the environment, from education." Well, if you are a Republican and you cross the street, the American President right now is going to accuse you of hurting seniors and children and the environment and education. It does not matter. He is a broken record. It is a formula that works for him, class warfare and scare-mongering. But we are sick and tired of it.

It is interesting that liberal Senator BOB KERREY said that when you are talking about a \$3 trillion surplus, an \$800 billion tax reduction program is not reckless or irresponsible. That is from a well thought of, but liberal, Democratic Senator. He is saying, "What's the big deal?"

What is the big deal, Mr. Speaker? We are talking about the size of a tax cut. We are not talking about whether to have one or not. The President has already agreed to one. Most of the liberals in Congress have agreed to one. We are only talking about the size of it.

Mr. Speaker, this tax package that was voted on the other day, again three-pronged, protects and preserves Social Security to the tune of \$1.9 trillion through a lockbox, and protects 100 percent of it; number two, pays down the debt \$2 trillion; and, number three, and finally and only after the others have been protected, it gives tax relief. Therefore, it is a good, responsible bill. I urge my colleagues to support it.

ON TITLE IX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, tonight we celebrate 27 years

of title IX, a piece of legislation that was cosponsored by our dear friend the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) whom we come tonight to congratulate, along with Congresswoman Edith Green.

I have worked, Mr. Speaker, tonight with the cochair of the Women's Caucus, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), together women and men of the House, to recognize these two remarkable women and their achievements and their bringing about title IX, which began some 27 years ago.

These congresswomen planted a seed of opportunity for women that has blossomed into one of the greatest triumphs of our time. The successes of basketball superstar Nikki McCray; swimming sensation Penny Heyns; golf maestro Sherri Stein; the Williams sisters tennis phenomenon; ice hockey superstar Cammi Granat; the unstoppable softball shortstop Dot Richardson; World Cup soccer champions Mia Hamm, Brianna Scurry and Michelle Ackers; and Air Force Colonel Eileen Collins, the first woman to command a NASA shuttle mission which just took off on Friday. We are proud of all of them, Mr. Speaker, and we attribute their successes to title IX.

The impressive accomplishments of these women, and many more who have excelled both on and off the playing field, are not solely because of title IX. We know it takes drive, aggression, determination, competitiveness, sacrifice, true grit and a lifetime's dedication to hard work. These women are tough and they deserve to soar in their areas of expertise as they have done. But the passage of title IX, Mr. Speaker, opened a door that had been locked shut for countless decades and for countless generations of women who wanted to be challenged and pushed to new limits through athletic competition. Title IX allowed young women and girls to follow in the footsteps of tennis wonder Billie Jean King, track superstar Wilma Rudolph, and other pioneering female athletes.

It was the arduous and innovative work of the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) and Edith Green 27 years ago, which we celebrated last Friday, July 23, that brought the Educational Amendments Act, which included title IX, to the desk of President Nixon. The gentlewoman from Hawaii, who is here tonight to help us celebrate her and to commend her, was both shrewd and precise in making sure that the inclusion of a few simple words would provide such a tremendous opportunity for women to develop latent athletic talents.

Specifically, the statute states, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

The progress we have made over the past 27 years is awesome, Mr. Speaker.

When President Nixon signed this bill, about 31,000 women were involved in college sports. Today, that number has more than tripled. Spending on athletic scholarships for women has also grown from less than \$100,000 to almost \$200 million. In 1971, there was an average of 2.1 women's teams at colleges, and now that number is at a record 7.7 per school. The participation level in high school was dismal, as well. In 1971, the athletic participation of all girls in the United States was just under 300,000. Today, that number has climbed to over 2.2 million. Finally, 40 percent of athletes at Division I schools in 1997-1998 were women, a 5 percent increase from 1996-1997. Women also received 40 percent of athletic scholarship budgets, a 14 percent rise from the previous year.

Since the enactment of title IX, we have also witnessed a significant surge in women's educational achievements. In 1994, women received 38 percent of medical degrees and 43 percent of law degrees, compared with 9 and 7 percent respectively in 1972. In 1994, women also earned 44 percent of all doctoral degrees, which is a noticeable increase from the 25 percent in 1977.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps most exciting of all, title IX has benefited millions of women, men and families who enjoy watching and playing sports. Over 40 million viewers tuned in to the final match of the Women's World Cup. That number was not only greater than any televised game for U.S. men's soccer but it also eclipsed the three-game viewing total for this year's NHL Stanley Cup. What the women's U.S. soccer team illustrated with their victory is just how far we have come as a Nation in providing opportunities for women to test their limits, excel in sports and fulfill their dreams in many more areas than women of our generation could ever fathom.

Tonight, I salute our dear friend the Honorable PATSY MINK and the Honorable Edith Green for paving the way for women to succeed in our educational institutions. And I give my most heartfelt congratulations to all of our athletic and academic achievers, who are the women of title IX.

BACKGROUND LEADING TO PASSAGE OF HISTORIC TITLE IX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for this honor that they are bestowing on me this evening and I want to especially thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) for taking the initiative in convening this series of comments that will be made on title IX tonight.

Today, we are witnessing the results of the formation of a concept which was incorporated in the education amendments of 1972 in a small title referred to as title IX. It is important, I